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Human rights questions: human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives

Programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

Situation of human rights in Myanmar

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/59/L.49

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

A. Requests contained in the draft resolution

1. Under the terms of operative paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.3/59/L.49, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General:

(a) To continue to provide his good offices and to pursue his discussions on the situation of human rights and the restoration of democracy with the Government and people of Myanmar, including all relevant parties to the national reconciliation process in Myanmar;

(b) To give all necessary assistance to enable his Special Envoy for Myanmar, as well as to the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, to discharge their mandate fully and effectively;

(c) To report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session and to the Commission on Human Rights at its sixty-first session on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

B. Relationship of the proposed requests to the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005

2. The requests set out above relate to subprogramme 1, Prevention, control and resolution of conflicts, of programme 1, Political affairs, and subprogramme 3,

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Advisory services, technical cooperation, support to human rights fact-finding procedures and field activities, of programme 19, Human rights, of the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005, as revised.[1]

C. Activities by which the requests would be implemented

3. In his report to the General Assembly (A/59/269), the Secretary-General indicated that the citizens of Myanmar had endured unnecessary social and economic hardship because of the absence of an all-inclusive process of democratization and national reconciliation in their country and that their predicament had been compounded by economic policies that had prevented the majority of them from improving their livelihoods. He reiterated his determination to underscore the United Nations system's parallel commitment to investing in Myanmar's long-term future, within the existing constraints, by enhancing the scale and scope of its social and humanitarian engagement with people and communities across the country. The Secretary-General pointed out that he remained committed to taking further appropriate steps to underpin progress, in partnership with the international community, in the event that sustainable progress towards democratization and national reconciliation occurred.

4. Consistent with the requests contained in operative paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.3/59/L.49, the good offices of the Secretary-General would be continued in 2005 in pursuit of his discussions on the situation of human rights and the restoration of democracy with the Government and people of Myanmar, as well as all relevant parties to the national reconciliation process. The good offices of the Secretary-General would be carried out through his Special Envoy for Myanmar, and the progress made in the implementation of the resolution would be reported to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session and to the Commission on Human Rights at its sixty-first session.

D. Estimated resource requirements

5. The estimated costs of continuing the good offices of the Secretary-General to facilitate the process of national reconciliation and democratization through his Special Envoy for Myanmar, as requested in paragraphs 4 (a) and (b) of draft resolution A/C.3/59/L.49, for a one-year period, from 1 January to 31 December 2005, amount to $252,400 net ($294,900 gross). Of that amount, $6,200 would be met from the unencumbered balance against the appropriation for 2004. Thus the overall requirements for the Special Envoy for 2005, after taking into account the unencumbered balance, amount to $246,200 net ($288,700 gross).

6. Those resources would cover the salaries of the Special Envoy, to be engaged on a when-actually-employed basis, and of a local staff member who would provide support to the Special Envoy; the official travel of the Special Envoy to Myanmar and neighbouring countries, as well as to Europe and North America, including United Nations Headquarters; the services of a consultant; and miscellaneous services in support of the mission. Other substantive and administrative support would be provided to the Special Envoy by the Department of Political Affairs. (For a cost breakdown of those activities, see the annex to the present statement.)

7. With regard to the request contained in paragraph 4 (b) of the draft resolution regarding assistance to the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, the mandate of the Special Rapporteur falls under the category of activities considered to be of a perennial nature. Provisions for activities of this nature have already been included in the programme budget for the current biennium under section 24, Human rights (A/58/6 (Sect. 24)).

E. Action required by the General Assembly

8. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.3/59/L.49, a total of $252,400 net ($294,900 gross) would be required for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2005 for the continuation of the good offices of the Secretary-General relating to the situation in Myanmar, of which $6,200 would be met from the existing appropriation. Thus the additional resource requirements would amount to $246,200 net ($288,700 gross).

Notes

[1] *Official records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/57/6/Rev.1).

Annex

Breakdown of costs associated with draft resolution A/C.3/59/L.49

Civilian personnel costs

Estimate: $102,600

1. The provision of $102,600 in general temporary assistance would cover the salary of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General at the Under-Secretary-General level on a when-actually-employed basis for a maximum period of 210 days in 2005 at the daily rate of $477, and the salary of one General Service (Local level) staff member for an aggregate period of three months to assist the Special Envoy as and when required.

Operational costs

Estimate: $149,800

Consultants

2. In carrying out the good offices role, the Special Envoy would require the services of consultants to analyse the implications of the seven-step road map announced by the Government of Myanmar in August 2003, with emphasis on the legal procedures and guidelines for the reconvening of the National Convention and the drafting of a new Constitution, to study other road maps suggested by various outside parties for the democratic transition of Myanmar, and to formulate recommendations that the Special Envoy can present to the Government of Myanmar and other parties involved in order to facilitate the process of democratic transition. Accordingly, an amount of $48,500 is requested to provide for the fees and travel of a consultant for an aggregate period of six months.

Official travel

3. A provision of $95,600 is made for the official travel of the Special Envoy to United Nations Headquarters, Myanmar, other countries in the region, Europe and North America for briefings, representation and consultations. In addition, provision has been made for the travel of a political affairs officer to travel with the Special Envoy on his missions as required. The requirements for travel, including airfare, daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses, have been estimated on the basis of 23 individual trips of varying duration.

Communications

4. An amount of $2,100 is requested to cover the cost of commercial communications, including long-distance telephone calls, facsimile charges, diplomatic pouch and postage.

Other supplies, services and equipment

5. Provision in the amount of $3,600 is made for miscellaneous office supplies and services.